



Mayor Michael B. Coleman

HR CONNECTIONS

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

QUARTERLY

Extra, Extra Read All About It

HR WEBSITES:

Be sure to visit the Human Resources Internet and Intranet site for the latest information on training opportunities, EEO, Labor Relations, Employee Benefits/ Risk Mgmt, and Employee Resources

(Internet)

[Http://hr.ci.columbus.oh.us](http://hr.ci.columbus.oh.us)

(Intranet)

[Http://intranet/](http://intranet/)
Click on
Human Resources

INSIDE:

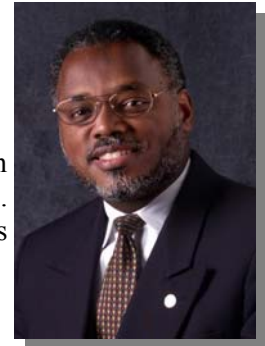
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Department of HR welcomes new employees:

Karen Hudson,
Compensation
Manager;
James Lendavic,
Labor Relations
Specialist;
and
Janel Perry,
Administrative
Secretary

A Message From the Director:

Welcome to the September 2001 issue of H.R. Connections. We are embarking upon an extraordinarily busy time of the year. Appointing authorities and their management teams are engaged in finalizing their budgets using the "Performance Budgeting" model. Design teams are busy at work and many other strategic initiatives are underway. Two items of particular interest are worthy of mention here.



First, I am privileged to serve with Mr. Doug Moore, President of AFSCME, Local #1632, as co-chair of this year's Combined Charitable Campaign. As public employees, we work hand in hand each day with people in our community to provide services that enhance their quality of life. Through participation in the Combined Charitable Campaign, we have the opportunity to supplement the services we provide. Our contributions provide basic needs in health, rehabilitation, education, and social and community services for those less fortunate. Thank you in advance for joining us in "making our community the best place to live, work and raise a family - one contribution at a time." The campaign began September 10, and will continue through October 22, 2001.

UPCOMING CITYWIDE SURVEY...

Second...In order to achieve Mayor Coleman's vision for Columbus, it is important to identify and prioritize workplace improvement opportunities. The Department of Human Resources has engaged The Center for Human Resources Research at the Ohio State University, to conduct a confidential survey of all City employees. While participation is voluntary, your answers are critical to providing the City with the information needed to help understand how you feel about working for the City and what issues are important to you. These factors are key to evaluating and improving workplace programs and policies. Please look for more detailed information regarding the survey in the very near future. This effort will only be successful with your participation, so thanks in advance for your assistance.

Chester C. Christie, Director, Human Resources

HR recently conducted an Internal Survey to evaluate the level of customer satisfaction in critical HR service delivery areas. Additional details about the results of the survey are published on the HR Webpage. See above for website address.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE CORNER

SPECIAL: Managing Traumatic Stress

The events of last week were the type of events that we thought could never happen. Like all disasters, this one especially impacted people in a powerful way, producing strong emotional reactions. It is important to understand that these powerful responses are **normal reactions to abnormal events**. Understanding this can aid you in coping effectively with thoughts, feelings and behaviors, and help in the healing process.



TYPICAL REACTIONS TO A TRAUMATIC EVENT:

1. Shock and denial, especially shortly after the event. These are normal protective reactions that allow us time to absorb the reality of the trauma.
2. Emotions become more intense and may be unpredictable, people may be moody, anxious, nervous, or depressed, and some will be tearful and/or withdrawn. As the reality of the event settles in, people may become angry and easily provoked. Relationships may be affected.

*HELPFUL GUIDELINES FOR TALKING WITH CHILDREN:

1. Continually reassure your children that you will help to keep them safe.
2. TURN OFF THE TV. Overexposure to the media can be traumatizing. If older children are watching the news, watch with them and talk with them. Let them ask questions and express themselves.
3. Adolescents in particular may be hard hit by these kinds of events. Obtaining counseling for a child or adolescent who seems particularly upset, may reduce long-term effects.
4. Calmly express your emotions, but remember that a composed demeanor will provide a greater sense of security for your child. Consider how you and your child can help. Children are better able to regain their sense of power and security if they feel they can help in some way.

*from the Child Care Advocacy Newsletter, Children's Defense Fund

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOURSELF AND OTHERS:

1. Be patient. Healing occurs at a different rate for everyone, but rarely occurs overnight.
2. Ask for support. Reach out to friends and relatives, or call your **City EAP at 645-6894**. However, be cautious about continually talking about these events. This may keep stress reactions stirred up and interfere with your system's natural ability to heal.
3. Participate in healthy behaviors: eat healthfully, get enough rest, exercise, limit caffeine and alcohol intake, and drink plenty of water.

Submitted by the Employee Assistance Program

Get ready for the Winter Cold Season

The common cold is one of the leading causes of doctor visits and job and school absenteeism. Most common colds occur in the fall or winter. Symptoms which include nasal discharge, scratchy throat, sneezing, sore throat, cough, headache and a slight fever may last as long as 14 days. One of the key ways to prevent the common cold is simply, washing your hands. Treat a common cold by drinking plenty of fluids, gargling with warm salt water and taking aspirin. Complicated cold symptoms such as high fever, swollen glands, sinus pain, or cough that produces mucus, may require a doctor's attention.

Submitted by Lisa Howard, Employee Benefits

EMPLOYEE RESOURCES

Parents and Grandparents! A TAX-FREE WAY TO SAVE FOR COLLEGE!



OHIO'S TAX-FREE COLLEGE SAVINGS PROGRAM!

The expense of a college education is imposing an ever-increasing burden on the American family. This plan was designed specifically to help ease this burden with tax benefits (qualified withdrawals are state and federal tax-free as of January 1, 2002, regardless of the date of the contribution) with an array of investment options.

With Ohio's College Advantage Savings Plan:

- Anyone can participate, Parents/ Grandparents, etc.
- Account ownership, upon death or disability, may be passed to whomever you desire.
- You may deduct up to \$2000 per year from your state reportable income.

Funds can be used at over 8,000 U.S. Dept. of Education approved institutions, foreign and domestic!

- Funds can be used for any purpose! (tax treatment would differ for non-qualified distributions)

For more info. call Randall T. Gerber, Gerber Financial Advisors, Raymond James Financial Services at 1-877-850-4400 or Jason C. Clark or Craig Reager of First Union Securities at 1-800-400-1177

(Submitted by Tina Defluiter, Volunteer Coordinator)

CITYWIDE TRAINING & EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Did you know that Citywide Training offers all City Employees the opportunity to enhance their careers in 4 areas of study? They are **Human Resource Development, Supervisory Skill Development, Customer Service, and Office Management.**

Enrollment is made easy by simply submitting your "Letter of Intent" to Citywide Training and completing the 8 required courses and 4 elective courses associated with any of the four "Skill Development Programs."

For more information on the programs, see the 2001 Citywide Training Catalogue, visit the Human Resources Web page on the Intranet, or you can call Citywide Training at 645-8294.

SAFETY FIRST...

City Safety Workers get more visibility

Many city employees continually put their safety in the hands of others. Work sites often contribute to low worker visibility. During dusk, nighttime, and inclement weather, workers become less visible. Because cones and barricades are often the same bright orange color of safety vests, workers can blend into their environment rather than stand out. For these reasons, the City has adopted a new, bright fluorescent lime green-yellow vest.

The **American National Standard for High-Visibility Safety Apparel**, has set a new standard for garments based on worker hazards and tasks, complexity of the work environment and vehicular traffic and speed. The City of Columbus has recommended that each Division require the new safety vests with a solid bright fluorescent lime-yellow background and 360 degree reflective coverage. This vest will help differentiate workers from orange barrels, cones and barricades on city roadways, thus increasing safety and developing uniformity among the many City Divisions.

Submitted by:

Jim Reynolds (Traffic Engineering), Jill Taptich (Water), Tracy Thompson (Construction Inspection) and Wes Yohey (Engineering & Construction)

DID YOU KNOW.....

The **Office of Equal Employment Opportunity**, Department of Human Resources is an effective resource available to both City of Columbus management and employees. For management, EEO offers and encourages informal consultation with supervisors and managers regarding EEO issues and concerns which develop in the workplace.

EEO recommends a pro-active approach by management to resolve situations before they reach crisis level and/or become the basis for a formal complaint. For employees, the staff of EEO is available by telephone or in person to “just listen” or to counsel and to advise as to how workplace issues and problems may be resolved without adversarial confrontation or the filing of a formal complaint. In such cases, the Office will

make a concerted effort to mediate expressed concerns in an effort to arrive at resolutions which are acceptable to all parties.

EEO Office staff currently offers sexual harassment training to all City employees and, shortly, will also be offering two other training courses: (1) EEO Orientation for Supervisors, and (2) Refresher Course on Sexual Harassment for City employees who had the original training three or more years ago. Look for these course listings in the Citywide Training Catalogue in the very near future.

The EEO Staff includes Melvin Richardson, J.D., Equal Employment Opportunity Manager (614-645-8871), and Brenda Price, Equal Opportunity Officer (614-645-4315).

The office is in Rm. 306 of City Hall.

Submitted by Brenda Price

Need the dates and times of a particular training? Just go to Citywide Training on the Intranet to find and print any of the current training announcements for the quarter and a map to the Citywide Training Facility. If you have suggestions for additions or modifications to this site, please email aaamos@cmhmetro.net

HEALTH BENEFIT NOTES**30 DAYS TO ENROLL NEW BORN AND/OR NEW SPOUSE**

Enrollment in your health insurance benefit is a critical step to ensure that you or your family has the necessary coverage afforded under each labor contract. The City of Columbus Benefit Booklet outlines the requirements for enrollment of a new dependent. As an employee it is your responsibility to notify your division Payroll or Human Resources personnel and complete an Enrollment Form listing pertinent information about the new dependent **WITHIN 30 DAYS** of a new birth or date of marriage. If this date is missed, the next window of opportunity to enroll is during **Open Enrollment** in February.

Contact your division Human Resources for the Enrollment Forms to add your dependent to the United Health Care medical insurance and the Anthem dental insurance form.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

United HealthCare.....	1-800-681-3849
Medical, Rx Drug, Pre-certification	
Mail Order Rx Drug.....	1-800-681-3849
Nurseline.....	1-877-365-7922
Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield	1-800-282-1730
Dental	
Vision Service Plan	1-800-877-7195
Vision	
Prudential Life Insurance	
Life:	At work employees contact Division Payroll Department.
	Terminating employees, call Risk Management to convert
	within 31 days of terminating City employment
CobraServ.....	1-800-790-9056
COBRA: Continuation Benefits	
CareWorks.....	1-888-899-1232
Workers' Compensation Managed Care Organization	
Anthem Life	
Short term disability. Complete forms through Division payroll.	
AFLAC.....	614-761-1342
Pre-tax benefits. Dependent child care	
Colonial Life.....	614-882-9307
Voluntary insurance options	
Employee Benefits/Risk Management.....	614-645-8065
Deferred Compensation.....	1-877-644-6457
Citywide Training Hotline.....	614-645-7733

**Ohio Public
Employees Deferred
Compensation
Program**

**Please update your records to
show the new telephone numbers
for Deferred Compensation as
1-800-OHIO457
or
1-800-644-6457
The Internet website
address is:
www.ohio457.org**

**HR Connections
brought to you by**

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